Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 305960
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TO CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 305960

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE ONLY

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: VM

SUBJECT: REPORT RELEASED BY SEN. KENNEDY CALLS FOR
LIFTING EMBARGO TO VIETNAM

FOLLOWING DECEMBER 22 REUTERS ITEM REPEATED FOR YOUR
INFORMATION:

QUOTE: A SENATE REPORT TODAY CALLED ON PRESIDENT CARTER TO LIFT THE U.S. TRADE EMBARGO AGAINST VIETNAM TO ALLOW SHIPMENT OF FOOD AND OTHER SUPPLIES.

CITING SERIOUS FOOD SHORTAGES IN VIETNAM AND LAOS, THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE REPORT ALSO URGED THAT THE UNITED STATES SEND DISASTER RELIEF TO THE TWO COUNTRIES, RESPOND TO INTERNATIONAL APPEALS FOR FOOD AND RELATED AID AND PAY SHIPPING COSTS FOR AMERICAN VOLUNTARY AGENCIES SENDING IN SUPPLIES.

THE REPORT WAS RELEASED BY SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY,
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WHO SAID "A NEW HUMANITARIAN CRISIS" "WAS BUILDING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BECAUSE OF WAR DISLOCATIONS, THREAT OF FAMINE AND THE MOUNTING PRESSURE OF REFUGEES IN THAILAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

"OUR COUNTRY SHOULD ABANDON THE PIECEMEAL APPROACH IN OUR RESPONSE TO THESE INTERRELATED PEOPLE PROBLEMS AND

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DEVELOP MORE COMPREHENSIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT REALISTICALLY RESPOND TO WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA TODAY," SENATOR KENNEDY SAID IN A STATEMENT.

THE REPORT COMMENDED PRESIDENT CARTER FOR HIS EARLY EFFORTS TO SEEK RECONCILATION AND NORMAL RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM, BUT SAID FOOD AND HUMANITARIAN AID NEEDS OF BOTH VIETNAM AND LAOS SHOULD BE RESPONDED TO APART FROM DISCUSSIONS ON FUTURE RELATIONS.

URGING THAT THE PRESIDENT LIFT THE TRADE EMBARGO AGAINST VIETNAM TO PERMIT THE FLOW OF FOOD AND OTHER SUPPLIES FROM THE UNITED STATES, THE REPORT SAID IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT VIETNAM WOULD NEED TO IMPORT AS MUCH AS TWO MILLION TONS OF FOOD IN 1978 AND LAOS 367,000 TONS.

IT CALLED FOR U.S. FLEXIBILITY IN OFFERING RESETTLEMENT TO INDOCHINESE REFUGEES AND SAID THE NUMBER ALLOWED TO ENTER THE COUNTRY "SHOULD RESPOND TO THE EBB AND FLOW OF THEIR MOVEMENT AND DEMONSTRATED RESETTLEMENT NEEDS, AND NOT TO SOME ARBITRARY QUOTA..."

IT CALLED FOR A NEW FORMULA FOR ADMISSION OF "BOAT PEOPLE," SAYING THE CURRENT CRITERIA SPECIFYING THAT THEY BE LEFT OVER FROM THE 1975 EVACUATIONS "ARE NO LONGER APPROPRIATE OR USEFUL."
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THE REPORT ALSO SAID THE UNITED STATES SHOULD "ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE MORE ACTIVELY" LOCAL SETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES IN HOST COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY THAILAND WHICH IT SAID WAS PREPARED TO MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION.

IT SAID VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION WOULD BECOME A VIABLE AND HUMANE OPTION FOR SOME REFUGEES ONLY IF THERE WERE ASSURANCES OF PROTECTION ON RETURN. ANY FUTURE VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION, IT ADDED, SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT UNDER INTERNATIONAL AUSPICES. END QUOTE.

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
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TAGS: ETRD, EAID, SWEL, VM, US, (KENNEDY, EDWARD M)
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